Complete SEO

SEO Markup, Proper Coding & Understanding Backlinks

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Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

SEO improves your website so search engines understand what you offer and show it to people actively searching for it. Search examples:

"Emergency plumber Hervey Bay"
"Lawn mowing service near me"

These are long-tail phrases. Good SEO regularly edits your code to align with changes in search behaviour. SEO is for clarity, not tricking Google.

SEO Requires a Clean Foundation

SEO works best on clean, well-structured websites. Page builders and plugins often produce bloated code, repeated markup, and weak content structure. These issues limit how search engines interpret your site and reduce ranking potential. Before SEO begins, these sites often require restructuring, code clean-up, and alignment with search intent.

The Core Pillars of SEO

1. Relevance (The Foundation)

Your website must clearly explain what you do, where you operate, and who you serve. If content is vague, rankings suffer. Relevance is the foundation.

2. Technical Foundation

This ensures your site works properly including:
- Fast loading speed (under 3 seconds ideal)
- Mobile responsiveness (works well on mobiles)
- A secure HTTPS certificate
- Clear navigation with no broken links

Technical SEO strengthens relevant content; it does not create rankings alone. Large images, bloated code, and poor alt tags (image descriptions because Google associates images with topics) reduce performance and Google's ability to access, navigate, and read a website's content.

3. Backlinks (Authority Signals)

A backlink is a link from another website to yours. Relevant links from reputable sources signal credibility. One strong local link outweighs dozens of weak directory links.

Local & regional backlinks (highest priority)

Who to approach:
- Local council or regional business listings
- Tourism and regional "visitor" websites
- Community noticeboards and local directories
- Event/market/fair websites the business attends
- Business related clubs, associations and societies
- Local newspapers/magazines/online publications

How to get them:
Keep messages short and human e.g. "We're a local business and would like to be listed as a local service/maker for your community."

Industry & niche-specific backlinks

Who to approach:
- Niche blogs (small to medium size is ideal)
- Educational or hobby websites
- Resource pages related to the industry
- Community groups with websites
- Product/service review/comparison websites

How to earn links:
- Offer helpful content such as guides/local advice
- Suggest relevant pages on your site to link to

Partner & supporter backlinks

Approach clubs, suppliers, sponsors, charities or collaborators. Offer a partnership mention or benefit and request a supporter listing.

Social & brand validation links

These build trust rather than rankings.

Ensure you have links from:
- Google Business Profile
- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn (if relevant)
- Event/community profiles

What clients should you avoid:
- Generic overseas directories
- Paid backlink packages
- Blog comment links (from personal blogs)
- Footer link swaps (link to me & I'll link to you)
- Irrelevant websites (not related to yours at all)
- "Guaranteed ranking" services

Google knows these and they damage rankings.

Realistic expectations

- 5–10 strong backlinks = solid foundation
- 15–25 quality links = very healthy

Growth should be gradual.

Rule: "Would this link make sense if Google did not exist?" If yes, it is likely valuable.

4. User Experience

Search engines measure user behaviour. If visitors leave quickly or struggle to navigate, rankings drop. If they stay and engage, trust increases. SEO is closely tied to usability and speed.

Core Web Vitals

Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS)

Measures page element movement when loading.
  Good: < 0.1 → Very small visual instability
  Poor: > 0.25 → Large jumps during load

Unexpected movement frustrates users, reduces user confidence in your business & they may leave.

Interaction to Next Paint (INP)

Measures responsiveness after interaction.

• Good: under 200 ms   • Poor: above 500 ms

High INP is often caused by excessive JavaScript.

Schema Markup (Structured Data)

Schema is website code that helps search engines understand content such as business address, hours, services, and reviews. It enables enhanced search results. Implemented using JSON-LD in the <head>, it clarifies meaning but does not create rankings. It also must match visible site content.

Canonical Tags & URL Clarity

Canonical tags identify the primary version of a page when multiple URLs exist (such as www vs non-www). They prevent authority fragmentation.

Single-Page vs Multi-Page Websites

Single-page sites work for small businesses but provide only one page to rank. Multi-page sites allow multiple ranking opportunities. A well-built small business single page can still perform well.

Anchor Text & Link Balance

Anchor text is clickable link text such as:
   "Maryborough electrician" (keyword-rich)
   "John's Electrical" (brand-based)
Healthy backlink profiles contain a natural mix of brand names, natural phrases, and descriptive terms. Overusing exact-match keywords (key-word stuffing) appears manipulative and lowers ranking.

SEO Parts Weighting

Estimated long-term SEO part influence levels:
- Content relevance & intent alignment: ~45%
- Backlinks (authority signals): ~30%
- Structural clarity & schema: ~15%
- Meta content & descriptions: ~10%

Technical SEO strengthens content, but the last three points cannot replace poor content.

Popups & User Experience

Popups that appear randomly affect the user's website experience and also affect Google rankings because Google considers them intrusive. User-initiated popups are acceptable because they don't hinder the user's experience.

Long-Term SEO Philosophy

SEO is not about chasing algorithms. Search engines reward clarity, structure, relevance, and credibility. Proper SEO builds stable, lasting visibility. SEO is not a game to be won...

                  ...it is a system to be understood.

Choosing a SEO Provider

Good SEO is applied page-by-page with clear intent, accurate schema, relevant backlinks, and manual implementation. Automation and templates alone do not create strong results. Effective SEO makes your website a real customer-acquisition tool.

Note: This information is not just for SEO specialists, it is publically available very comprehensively at:
https://developers.google.com/search/docs/fundamentals/seo-starter-guide

Need help? See back page for information.

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Clear Structure. Durable Visibility.

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